ping companies are actively pursuing the acquisition proposals approved by the Government.

(c) and (d) The Shipping Credit & Investment Company of India Ltd. provides loans to private sector shipping companies at subsidised rate of interest. Guidelines framed by Government with the help of Shipping Credit & Investment Company of India Limited for rehabilitation of viable private sector shipping companes, include moratorium on repayment of loans, interest holiday for a limited period, rescheduling the repayment of loans etc. these measures would help potentially viable shipping companies.

Trains between Mysore and Bangalore

*128. SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the trains between Mysore and Bengalore are presently taking long time;

(b) whether there is any proposal to streamline the running time of these trains; and

(c) whether a non-stop train between Mysore and Bangalore is likely to be introduced in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and and (b) There is some increase in journey time due to ongoing Broad Gauge conversion work on the section.

(c) No, Sir.

Indo-Pak talks

*129. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA JAYAWANTRAO PATIL:

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the schedule for holding the series of meetings between Defence, Home and Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan and that of Joint Commission;

(b) what would be the likely agenda therefor; and

(c) what are the reasons for delay in holding these official meetings originally scheduled to start earlier this year?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SHRI (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) to (c) The Joint Commission meeting is scheduled for some time in July 1989. The other Secretary-level meetings are evisaged during the next eight weeks. All these will be held during the first half of 1989 as agreed during the meeting between our Prime Minister and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The Joint Commission is expected to identify areas of cooperation in the fields of trade, economic cooperation. education, culture, information, sports, travel, tourism and consular matters. Defence Secretary, Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary level talks will focus on Siachen, the problem of terrorism, and bilateral and other issues respectively.

Constitution of Literacy Mission Authority

*130. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted by Government to assess the present status of illiteracy in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what was the number of illiterates in the country at the end of 1987 and 1988;

(d) whether Government have constituted Literacy Mission Authority to